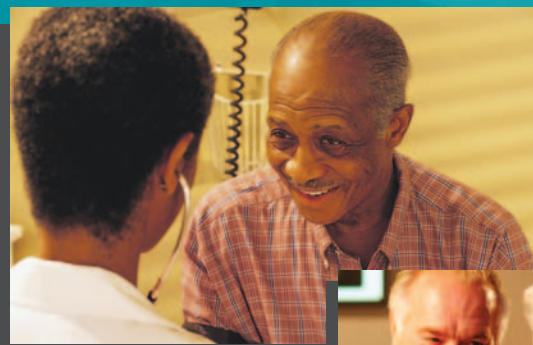




Spreading the Word About Medicare's New Preventive Services



Make Sure Your Community is Aware of Medicare's Preventive Services

- "Welcome to Medicare" Physical Exam (*NEW*)
- Cardiovascular Screening (*NEW*)
- Diabetes Screening (*NEW*)
- Cancer Screenings

COMING SOON

January 1, 2006

New Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

As you reach out to spread the news about Medicare's new preventive services, you may have the opportunity to answer questions about the new *Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage*. It will become effective January 1, 2006. We have included some basic information on the new drug coverage in Tab 5 of this toolkit for you to share with your community.

Briefly, we want people to know:

- Drug coverage will be available to everyone with Medicare.
- There will be extra help for those who need it most.
- There will be a choice of at least two drug plans.
- All plans will include both brand and generic drugs.

Enrollment Begins November 15, 2005

**For More Information Visit
www.cms.hhs.gov**



DEAR FRIENDS,

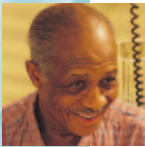
Our mission is clear; our challenge is great. We must inform the 41 million people with Medicare about their new preventive benefits. You are a critical part of this effort to improve the quality of life for America's seniors and people with disabilities. We appreciate your investment in this process and recognize how important your work is at the community level to reach people where they live, work, play, and pray.



Thanks to the passage of the Medicare Modernization Act, millions of people with Medicare will be able to live longer and healthier lives through the utilization of new preventive services that became effective January 1, 2005. **We are providing you with this package so we can work together in getting this good news out to the people covered by Medicare.**



To help, CMS has joined forces with the American Cancer Society (ACS), the American Diabetes Association (ADA), and the American Heart Association (AHA) to provide you with the prevention materials in this package that you can use to educate your community about the new preventive benefits. As a reminder, Medicare has been covering screenings for breast, cervical, colorectal and prostate cancer for some time. The new benefits include a one-time "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam for new beneficiaries, cardiovascular screening and diabetes screening, all of which will help facilitate the early diagnosis and treatment of disease.



We hope you will find this package easy to use as you help to spread the word about Medicare's preventive services within your community. **For additional information on Medicare's preventive benefits please go to our website, www.cms.hhs.gov.** Thank you in advance for your help in this important cause.

Sincerely,

Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and
Human Services

Mark B. McClellan, M.D., Ph.D.
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services



John R. Seffrin, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer
American Cancer Society

Lynne B. Nicholas, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
American Diabetes Association

M. Cass Wheeler
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association



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ABLE OF CONTENTS

This package includes the materials you will need to share information about Medicare's preventive services with your community.

SECTION 1

Tab 1 Presentation Materials

- Contact information for ACS, ADA, and AHA
- Facts about preventive benefits
- Frequently asked questions on the new preventive benefits
- *Medicare Good News for 2005*—**Parade Magazine** article

Tab 2 Community Education Materials

- *Guide to Medicare's Preventive Services*
- *Staying Healthy*—a summary brochure on Medicare's preventive benefits that you can copy and distribute

Tab 3 Communication Materials

- Sample newsletter article

Tab 4 Smoking Cessation

- Facts about Medicare's new smoking and tobacco use cessation coverage
- Frequently asked questions on Medicare's new smoking and tobacco use cessation coverage

SECTION 2

We have also included a fact sheet designed to introduce you to our upcoming Medicare prescription drug coverage.

Tab 5 Coming Soon

- *Introducing Medicare's New Coverage for Prescription Drugs*—a summary of Medicare's new prescription drug coverage available January 1, 2006

Back Pocket

- Medicare's new preventive services poster
- *Everyday Choices for a Healthier Life*
(a brochure from the ACS, ADA, and AHA)



CONTACT INFORMATION

Cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke have much in common. Together they represent both the largest killers in the Medicare population and the biggest expenditures in the Medicare program. Combined, these four chronic diseases account for nearly two out of every three deaths in the United States. However, each can be prevented or treated more effectively when diagnosed at earlier stages.

Therefore, our three organizations are pleased to have joined the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in providing you with the prevention materials in this informative package to increase awareness about Medicare's coverage for disease prevention and early detection. This packet contains helpful information about Medicare's new preventive services for you to share with seniors in your community.

Recently our organizations joined forces to launch "Everyday Choices For A Healthier Life," a three-year advocacy, public and professional education campaign to provide unified health recommendations for all Americans and joint screening advice for physicians. A copy of the "Everyday Choices" brochure has been provided in this package and can be made available to you to distribute in your community. For more information about this campaign visit our website at www.everydaychoices.org.

We encourage you to visit our websites, listed below, for more information about the new Medicare benefit as well as additional information on chronic disease prevention.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ■ American Cancer Society | www.cancer.org |
| ■ American Diabetes Association | www.diabetes.org |
| ■ American Heart Association | www.americanheart.org |

We look forward to working with you to improve and protect the health of our nation's seniors.

Sincerely,

Daniel E. Smith
National Vice President
Federal and State
Government Relations
American Cancer Society

James P. Schlicht
Chief Government Affairs
& Advocacy Officer
American Diabetes Association

Katherine Krause
Executive Vice President
Advocacy and Health
Initiatives
American Heart Association



FACTS ABOUT PREVENTIVE BENEFITS

New Medicare Benefits

- Historically, Medicare's coverage has focused on paying to treat costly health problems after they occur. But we know there is a better way to deal with our health problems, by preventing them when possible.
- In recent years, Medicare has added many screening and prevention services. Now, Medicare's benefits include: vaccinations, breast, cervical, colorectal and prostate cancer screenings, bone mass measurement, glaucoma screening, and medical nutrition therapy.
- Unfortunately, although Medicare has closed the "coverage gap" for prevention, patients haven't been fully utilizing these services. Medicare has made a number of changes aimed at getting people with Medicare to take advantage of these important preventive services.
- Beginning in 2005, all people with Medicare newly enrolled in Medicare Part B will be covered for an initial "Welcome to Medicare" physical examination. This exam **must** take place during the first 6 months after enrollment.
- The exam includes:
 - measurement of height, weight, and blood pressure.
 - an electrocardiogram.
 - education counseling and referral related to other preventive services covered by Medicare such as the screening and disease prevention services.
- This exam can be used to screen Medicare beneficiaries for many illnesses that if caught early can be treated and managed and can result in fewer serious illnesses and health consequences.
- By providing an initial physical exam for all newly enrolled Medicare beneficiaries, seniors and disabled Americans, will have the opportunity to discuss with their physician the importance of preventive care and living a healthy lifestyle.



FACTS ABOUT PREVENTIVE BENEFITS (cont.)

Closing the Prevention Gap

- In providing new services we are working hard to close the “prevention gap”—the difference between the number of seniors who could take advantage of preventive services that include vaccines and screenings and those who actually do.
- Closing this gap could save many thousands of lives as well as billions of dollars in avoidable medical expenses for preventable complications of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, thin bones, high blood pressure, smoking, inactive lifestyles, and other illnesses and unhealthy behaviors. But to be successful, we need you to participate and tell your friends.
- Medicare Advantage plans have the flexibility to cover far-reaching prevention services, such as wellness programs, beyond what Medicare covers. Medicare Advantage plans offer prevention benefits including health education services, exercise programs and other services that not only alert patients to potential health risks, but also actually work with them to change harmful lifestyles and encourage healthy behavioral changes.

Diabetes Screening

- One of the new screening tests available as of January 1, 2005 is diabetes screening for those at risk for diabetes. This includes people with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, or a history of high blood sugar. Other risk factors may also qualify you for these tests.
- This is a critically important test for those at risk since the earlier a person is diagnosed and treated for diabetes the more likely it is that the serious health consequences of diabetes can be prevented or delayed.
- Millions of people have diabetes and do not even know it. We must work hard to get those who have the disease diagnosed, so they can get appropriate care and treatment. This is truly a matter of life and death.
- Diabetes screening will also improve quality of life for those with the disease by treating the condition earlier. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness among adults, and the leading cause of end stage renal disease. With early detection and treatment the development of severe vision loss can be reduced by 50–60 percent and kidney failure can be reduced by 30–70 percent. Through more effective treatment, people will live



FACTS ABOUT PREVENTIVE BENEFITS (cont.)

to enjoy more birthday celebrations and significant family milestones like births of grandchildren, graduations, and weddings.

- And one very good part of this new law is that this particular screening test is free. There are no deductibles and no co-pays.

Cardiovascular Screening

- One other new screening benefit that you should be aware of is cardiovascular screening. For the first time Medicare beneficiaries will be eligible for cholesterol testing and other blood fat measurement.
- Since heart disease is the leading cause of death in this country, it is important for us to help find those people who are at risk for developing heart disease or stroke.
- With this simple screening test we will be able to help millions of seniors to learn if they have an increased risk of developing heart disease and how they can control their cholesterol levels through diet, physical activity or if necessary with medicine.
- Cardiovascular screening will help to improve quality of life for those affected by identifying and treating conditions earlier. This is critical since high cholesterol is not associated with symptoms that make it easy for people to detect without the test. The earlier people begin to get treated the more likely they will avoid life-threatening events like heart attacks and strokes.
- As with the diabetes screening, the cardiovascular screening is free. There is no deductible and no co-pay for the test.
- With new screening benefits for diabetes and heart disease, and a new “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam, we have an unprecedented opportunity to really transform Medicare from a reactive program focused on treating medical conditions to a proactive program that facilitates health and wellness.

For more specific information about these benefits and other Medicare preventive services, get a free copy of the ***Guide to Medicare's Preventive Services*** (CMS Pub. No.10110) at www.medicare.gov on the web when you select “Publications.” Or, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q

Why are preventive services important?

A

Preventive services can find health problems early when treatment works best and can keep you from getting certain diseases or illnesses. Medicare pays for many preventive services to keep you healthy. Talk with your doctor or health care provider to find out what tests you need and how often you need them to stay healthy.

Q

Does the new Medicare Modernization Act add any preventive services that will help me stay healthy?

A

Yes. Starting January 1, 2005, Medicare will cover:

- A one-time “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam for people new to Medicare
- Cardiovascular screenings
- Diabetes screenings

Q

Are all people with Medicare eligible to get the “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam?

A

No. Starting January 1, 2005, only people enrolling in Medicare Part B for the first time can get a “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam. Medicare only covers this physical exam if you get it within the first six months you have Part B coverage. Your Medicare Part B coverage must be effective on or after January 1, 2005.

Q

What services are included in the “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam?

A

The “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam will include a thorough review of your health, education and counseling about the preventive services you need, like certain screenings and shots, and referrals for other care if you need it. The “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam is a great way to get up-to-date on important screenings and shots and to talk with your doctor about your family medical history and how to stay healthy.

During the exam, your doctor will record your medical history and check your blood pressure, weight and height. Your doctor will also give you a vision test and an Electrocardiogram (EKG). Depending on your general health and medical history, further tests may be ordered if necessary. You will also get a written plan (like a checklist) when you leave letting you know which screenings and other preventive services you should get.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)



Q How much does the “Welcome to Medicare” physical exam cost?

A You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount after you meet the yearly Part B deductible (\$110 for 2005). Since this may be your first Medicare-covered service, you may meet your entire Part B deductible at this visit.

Q What are the new cardiovascular screenings?

A Starting January 1, 2005, Medicare will cover cardiovascular screening tests. These tests check your cholesterol and other blood fat (lipid) levels. High cholesterol can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke. These tests will tell you if you have high cholesterol and can help you find cardiovascular problems in the early stages.

Q How often does Medicare cover the new cardiovascular screenings?

A Medicare will cover these cardiovascular screening tests once every five years. You don't have to pay a deductible or co-payment for these tests.

Q What is the new diabetes screening?

A Diabetes is a medical condition in which your body doesn't make enough insulin or has a reduced response to insulin. Diabetes causes your blood sugar to be too high because insulin is needed to use sugar properly. A high blood sugar level is not good for your health.

Starting January 1, 2005, Medicare will cover tests to check for diabetes. These tests are available if you have any of the following risk factors: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, or a history of high blood sugar. Other risk factors may also qualify you for these tests. Talk with your doctor for more information.

Q How often is the new diabetes screening covered by Medicare?

A Based on the results of your diabetes screening tests, you may be eligible for up to two diabetes screenings every year. You don't have to pay a deductible or co-payment for these tests.

Q What cancer screening does Medicare currently cover?

A Medicare covers the full-range of colorectal cancer tests, annual mammogram tests for women over 40, a pap test and pelvic exam once every 24 months and annual prostate exams for men over 50.

PARADE

*The following article appeared in the January 2, 2005 publication of PARADE.
It was authored by Dr. Isadore Rosenfeld.
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Second Opinion

By Isadore Rosenfeld

Published: January 2, 2005

Medicare Good News for 2005

The belief that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” has led many of us to get a routine physical exam, or “checkup.” There are two main reasons to see your doctor while you’re still well: 1) to discuss your lifestyle and learn what steps to take to stay healthy; and 2) to discover evidence of disease before you become aware of it. Early detection of cancer or heart disease can make the difference between life and death. Despite the fact that preventing or curing disease early on is much cheaper than treating protracted illness, “experts” in cost-effectiveness would have us believe that such routine physicals are too expensive. As a result, many health insurance carriers—including, I am sad to say, Medicare—have not been paying for routine examinations. In order to be reimbursed for a visit to the doctor, you must already be sick.

New Services

Insurers (and the government) now are gradually beginning to endorse preventive medicine in a meaningful way. Tommy Thompson, the outgoing Secretary of Health and Human Services, recently announced implementation of the Medicare Modernization Act, which was passed in 2003. Here’s what that means in practical terms:

Anyone who enrolls in Medicare after Jan. 1 is covered for one preventive physical exam. I would have liked to see this available to all seniors on an annual basis, but this is a start. The new program also includes an electrocardiogram and counseling about preventive services that already are available to all Medicare patients, such as:

- Vaccinations (pneumococcal, flu and hepatitis B)
- Screening mammograms
- Screening Pap smears as well as pelvic exams
- Prostate cancer screening
- Colorectal cancer screening
- Glaucoma screening (if at risk)
- Medical nutrition therapy (for those with diabetes or those with renal disease)
- Screening for diabetes (if at risk)
- When a doctor advises, screening for cardiovascular disease

Important: You must take advantage of this new policy within six months of enrolling in Medicare, which is why I want to draw your attention to it now—in plenty of time to do so. If you have any additional questions, visit www.cms.hhs.gov/medicarereform or call 1-800-MEDICARE.



*Prepared by
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Spreading the Word About Medicare's New Preventive Services



M E D I C A R E ' S P R E V E N T I V E S E R V I C E S

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